

Virginia Behavioral Health Advisory Council

2104 W. Laburnum Ave

Richmond, VA 23227

April 15th, 2015

I. Attendance

Present: Sherry Confer, Catharine Harrison, Katharine Hunter, Livia Jansen, Margaret Anne Lane, Dev Nair, Rhonda Thissen, Patricia Parham, Denise Thomas-Brown, Jenny Heilborn, Rebecca Summers, Bonnie Neighbour, Larry Almarode, William Hart, Jane Ellis, Betsy Lalla, Lynn DelaMer, Amanda Rode

Absent: William Williams, Anthony Duncan, Kathleen Levenston, Lisa Moore, Ron Pritchard, Anne Edgerton, Elizabeth Drapen, Heather Seaman, Becky Sterling, Lynn Lull, Mary Aab, Shatada Floyd-White

II. Guests

Sarah Rudden, Heather Zelle, David Conley

III. Opening of Business

President, Jane Ellis, called the meeting to order at 10:04 am.

IV. Welcome, Introductions, Public Comment

Introductions were made around the room. Jane Ellis made an announcement about how important it is for members to RSVP so that the appropriate number of lunches can be ordered. Bonnie Neighbour passed around a booklet of mental health resources that VOC AL produces twice a year. Jenny Heilborn from the Disability Law Center of Virginia announced that they are having a fundraiser next Friday April 24th.

V. DBHDS Update

Rhonda Thissen updated the Council with news from DBHDS. The first anniversary of the commissioner is coming up in May. DBHDS has been designated as one of two state agencies to oversee services to individuals with traumatic brain injury. Discharge assistance funding for individuals in state hospitals has become available. DBHDS has hired a new PACT Team Coordinator. The Peer Support Certification is coming out May 17th; DBHDS will be sponsoring some Peer Support Trainings within the next 15 months.

VI. Agency Updates

Sherry Confer from The Department of Medical Assistance Services updated the Council. There have been 2,200 individuals that have enrolled in the GAP Program, with the Tidewater region ranking in the highest amount of screenings and enrollments. If there are any questions or concerns about the GAP Program, e-mail: bridgethegap@dmass.virginia.gov.

Catherine Harrison from The Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services stated that the vocational rehabilitation program waiting list will be open for the most severely disabled, starting May 1st.

Bonnie Neighbour from VOCAL talked about the VOCAL Conference coming up May 18th-20th in Harrisonburg, VA. There will be 37 workshops, meetings, and presentations. Pro bono lawyers will be available for helping attendees fill out an advance directive. These advance directives include psychiatric advance directive sections but are complete advance directives.

VII. Financial Update

Jane Ellis and Larry Almarode gave the financial update in the absence of Anne Edgerton. There is conference money still available. Rhonda Thissen and Larry Almarode requested conference funding. There were no other questions.

VIII. Advance Directives Presentation

Heather Zelle, Post-Doctoral Research Associate University of Virginia Institute of Law, Psychiatry, and Public Policy, gave us an overview on Advance Directives Project in Virginia. There is a power point that will be distributed to all Council members.

IX. Discussion

The Council worked through lunch and reviewed and discussed an article by Dustin DeMoss: "Combating the Stigma of Mental Illness". There was some discussion about allocating funds to start an Anti-Stigma campaign since we have representatives from private practice and other organizations on the Council.

X. NAMI Virginia "Say it Out Loud" Presentation

Rebecca Summers, Program and Policy Intern, from NAMI Virginia presented NAMI's "Say it Out Loud" anti-stigma video. She passed out flash drives that had their "Say it Out Loud" program information on it.

XI. Mental Health First Aid

The DBHDS Suicide Prevention and MHFA Program Coordinator, Michael Olson, gave the Council a presentation on Mental Health First Aid. He explained the history behind MHFA, what the training consists of, why it works, and how it is implemented.

XII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:11pm.